

**HAMPTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SELECTMEN'S MEETING ROOM
August 25, 2003 7:00 PM**

PRESENT: Brian C. Warburton, Chairman, Virginia Bridle,
William Sullivan, Cliff Pratt, James Workman
James Barrington, Town Manager
Karen Anderson, Administrative Assistant

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. The Board of Selectmen held a public hearing to take comments from the public in regard to the Town accepting an access easement for Harbor Road Connector – Harbor Road to Duston Avenue. This is the second hearing in the process outlined in RSA 41:14-a for the town to accept a “connector” road that has been required by the Planning Board.

Mr. Jack Kavanaugh, 14 Dustin Avenue said that he reviewed the RSA for this process and noted that it deals with the acquisition of land, he said that this is only an easement. Mr. Barrington said that Attorney Gearreald is of the opinion that since the town would be acquiring rights to the land, although not in fee simple, it would be appropriate to use this process. Mr. Kavanaugh said that he would like to see this access accepted for emergency use only, as has been recommended by some experts at the Planning Board meetings and requested by residents of that area.

I. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Mr. Steve Jusseaume led the audience in the salute to the flag.

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Mrs. Bridle reminded the public that school starts next week and she urged drivers to be careful and urged children to use caution crossing the street.

Mr. Pratt announced that two wonderful events are taking place shortly in Hampton: the Seafood Festival and the Historical Society Pig Roast. He urged residents to enjoy these events.

III. APPOINTMENTS

1. Seafood Festival Committee

Mr. Warburton gave a brief history of the Seafood Festival, noting its success and pointing out that it attracts over 250,000 visitors to Hampton each year. On behalf of the Board of Selectmen, he thanked the Seafood Festival Committee and the Chamber of Commerce for their efforts on this wonderful event.

Mr. Jerry Dignam, Ms. Jude Dionne and Mr. Doc Noel represented the Chamber of Commerce and the Seafood Festival Committee. Mr. Noel thanked the Board for having them, and noted that in the four years since he has hired Mr. Dignam the event has become even more successful. He added that his assistant, Jude Dionne has helped the Chamber come a long way and she is very much appreciated. Mr. Noel noted that in addition to his staff, the 400-500 volunteers from the community have made the Seafood Festival one of the top events in the country.

Mr. Dignam outlined what would happen in this year's Seafood Festival. He emphasized that this event is like the jewel in the crown of events that happen in Hampton and pointed out that it is due in part to the cooperation the Chamber receives from the Board of Selectmen, the Department Heads, the Town Manager, and the local businesses. Mr. Dignam added that the event could not take place without the volunteers and for their efforts they receive a t-shirt and a gala party on September 11th. Volunteers can still call the hotline to help with the event. Mr. Dignam said that the most valuable commodity at the event is parking and the local businesses have been outstanding with their assistance in providing additional parking for the festival with free shuttle busses from First Student running all day.

Mr. Dignam told the Board that a large improvement has been made with the installation of underground electric and gas lines in Ocean Boulevard. He noted that Selectman Sullivan was very helpful in getting this done and the infrastructure will provide a safer and more efficient system.

Mr. Dignam said that at the gates to the Festival this year will be representatives from Special Olympics accepting voluntary donations. There will be entertainment on three stages continuously throughout the weekend. The fireworks will be on Sunday at 8:30 PM.

Mr. Dignam requested from the Board the use of ten parking spaces in the Island Path or Church Street lot for phasing in the entertainment; and two police officers for Friday and Saturday overnight shifts for security to augment the volunteers that they will have working.

Ms. Dionne outlined the new events, including Kiddie Land, located next to the Precinct Playground, which will feature entertainment for children. There will also be a culinary demo from Pat Whitley featuring local restaurants on Saturday and Sunday in front of the Chamber Office. In addition this year is a raffle for a seven day cruise to the Caribbean and a new fund-raising event through Special Olympics of "Duck Races" that will take place at Water Country and be broadcast into the Seafood Festival. Mr. Dignam noted that the Chamber will be selling souvenirs and he displayed some of the merchandise available.

Mr. Sullivan asked about the Kiddie Land and if it would be a secure area with day care. Ms. Dionne said that it is definitely not a secure area and parents are to stay with their children.

Mr. Workman MOTIONED that the Chamber of Commerce be allowed the use of ten parking spaces in either the Island Path parking lot or the Church Street parking lot.

Mrs. Bridle SECONDED

**VOTE: 4 FOR
1 ABSTAIN(Sullivan)**

Mr. Workman MOTIONED that the Town provide at no cost to the Chamber of Commerce two detail police officers for overnight security on Friday and Saturday nights.

Mrs. Bridle SECONDED

**VOTE: 4 FOR
1 ABSTAIN (Sullivan)**

Mr. Sullivan thanked Chief Wrenn for extending the season for the special officers one week in order to augment the regular staff. Mr. Sullivan noted that there were some problems last year with the sidewalk sales and said that with the new procedures in place this year, hopefully there won't be any similar problems.

Mr. Barrington asked if arrangements have been made for the vendors to have overnight parking. Mr. Dignam said that they have indicated to the vendors that they had to make their own individual arrangements for parking; in exchange the Chamber has provided the overnight security at the tents. Mr. Barrington said that in the past, the town has charged a fee for the vendors with trailers to park overnight in the Church Street lot. He asked the Board if they wanted to waive the new ordinance and allow that practice to continue.

Mrs. Bridle MOTIONED that the town allow overnight parking for a fee to vendors at the Seafood Festival.

Mr. Pratt SECONDED

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

Mrs. Bridle specified that the cost for the detail officers doing the overnight security will come out of the special revenue fund, not the budget. Mr. Barrington confirmed that.

2. Mr. Robert Estey, AssessorTimber Tax Warrant

Mr. Workman MOTIONED that the Board of Selectmen sign the Timber Tax Warrant in the amount of \$254.68.

Mrs. Bridle SECONDED

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

Current Use Land Release

Mr. Sullivan MOTIONED that the current use land release for 1.82 acres on John Stark Lane in the amount of \$14,000 be approved and signed by the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Workman SECONDED

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

MS 1

Mr. Sullivan MOTIONED that the MS - 1 be approved as prepared by the Assessor.

Mr. Pratt SECONDED

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

Mr. Warburton said that if any taxpayers have concerns about assessments, they need to call the Assessor's Office for correct information. He explained that the individual property assessments are going up a large percentage, but that does not mean that the property taxes are going up the same percentage. Mr. Warburton said that he does not want residents to be alarmed.

Mr. Estey explained that the tax rate is set every year and the process this year is not any different. The taxes collected are based on the budget approved the prior year and even without any change in assessments, he would estimate that there would be a 10% increase in the tax rate. He based that on the historic increases of 5% at the county and school level. The revaluation of properties was done this year because the current values were put in place in 1999, and over a period of time property values change at different rates based on sales, in various neighborhoods and inequities develop. Mr. Estey gave the example of some condo properties that were selling in 1998 for \$25,000 that are now selling for \$75,000 and some ocean front properties that were assessed at \$400,000 that have been selling for over a million dollars. He added that there are other properties that have increased at a much smaller percentage. Mr. Estey said that he estimates that one-third of the town properties will have an increase, one-third will have no increase and one-third will have a reduction in their property taxes.

Mr. Estey told the Board that the State has passed a mandate that towns have to update values at least every five years; he had anticipated doing this in Hampton in 2002, but when Hampton was designated for certification in 2003 he delayed the update until this year. The Assessing Standards Board looks for assessment ratios between 90% and 110% for certification and since Hampton's 2002 assessment ratio was 62% it would not have passed the certification test. Mr. Estey said that the goal of the 2003 assessment was to set the market values as of September, 2002, and it is very possible that there will be properties that the values will not be at 100% because property values continue to rise.

Mr. Estey said that unless there is a major error, he will not be holding any hearings on the new assessed values prior to the tax bills going out at the end of October or early November. He added that within the next couple of weeks his department will have lists prepared for the town office and the library for residents to review all of the assessments. Mr. Estey said that based on the new values, he anticipates the new tax rate will be around \$17.00 per thousand. Mr. Estey said that in October the assessments will be available on the Internet and he will try to get the web address shown on the tax bills.

Mr. Estey reminded the Board that last year the Town voted to increase the elderly exemptions in preparation for the new values, but the values did not change. The value of the exemption that some people received last year will be smaller than what it was last year.

Mr. Sullivan commended Mr. Estey and said that the quality of Hampton's Assessing Department is wonderful. He said that Mr. Estey handles the assessments in a fair and equitable manner. Mrs. Bridle said that even small increases in taxes can be a big deal for some residents, and there are 142 people in Hampton that got elderly exemptions in the past that may have to pay more taxes this year. Mr. Barrington said that he has information in regard to the time line for a Special Town Meeting for amending the elderly exemptions. Mr. Warburton said that normally this would go on the March warrant for the following year. Mr. Warburton asked Mr. Estey what would have to happen to amend the elderly exemptions for the upcoming tax bills. Mr. Estey said that there would have to be a Special Town Meeting to amend the exemptions, and while he does not have an opinion on whether that should be done, he suggested that if the Board were to consider adjusting the elderly exemptions they should also consider adjustments to the blind and disabled exemptions. Mr. Estey pointed out that if the Town wants to change the amount of the exemptions for 2003, the tax rate setting has to wait until that is completed. In order for the tax bills to go out on time, the process would need to be completed by October 10th and enough money would have to be calculated in the rate to allow for the overlay. Mr. Barrington said that a Special Town Meeting for this purpose does not require an order from the Superior Court. The Special Meeting can be called by a petition of 5% of the eligible voters on the checklist. He noted that as of this afternoon, there were approximately 12,000 voters on the checklist, which would require about 600 voters on a petition. Assuming that the Board receives the petition by September 8th there is a notice requirement and a Public Hearing requirement, which could take place by September 22nd. The Special Town Meeting could then be scheduled between October 8th and October 22nd.

Mr. Sullivan asked if the town had to have a Deliberative Session and separate balloting session because of the Official Ballot law. Mr. Barrington said that he had not found any reference to that, but will check into that further. Mr. Warburton asked who starts the petition. Mr. Barrington said that the petition could be started by anyone, including the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Pratt asked how much the exemptions would be changed. Mrs. Bridle said that she had presented some recommendations. Mr. Estey said that to try and make the exemption equal to the average assessment increase, the multiplier is 1.63%.

Mrs. Bridle MOTIONED that the Board of Selectmen move forward with a petition process for a Special Town Meeting to be held on October 14th for amending the elderly, disabled and blind exemptions by increasing the exemptions by 1.63% and rounding to the next highest thousand dollars.

Mr. Sullivan SECONDED

Mrs. Bridle asked when anyone interested in circulating the petitions could pick them up. Mr. Barrington said that he could have them ready by Wednesday morning.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

IV. OLD BUSINESS

Town Manager's Report

Budget Review

Mr. Barrington told the Board that he has started the budget review process. The Police Department budget was reviewed today and Fire and Public Works are scheduled later this week.

West Nile Virus

Mr. Barrington reported that the Building Inspector, Kevin Schultz informed him today that a dead crow, turned in from Seavey Street tested positive for West Nile Virus. He pointed out that there have been no cases of human infection from West Nile Virus in New Hampshire this year and the State Health Department has a toll free number and a web site that can provide additional information about this issue.

Police Facility

The Town Manager told the Board that the police facility construction started last week and while there were some growing pains getting started with a large project, they are making good progress at this time. The piles are being driven and hitting refusal at 35 feet, which is encouraging. Weekly construction meetings are taking place on Wednesday's and the Town Manager and the Police Chief will be attending this week. The Board of Selectmen will be kept informed of the progress.

Fragmites

Mr. Pratt said that there are some fragmites on Landing Road, coming north onto Route 101 from the marsh side that need to be cut back to allow vehicular view. Mr. Barrington will follow up on that.

Budget Committee

Mrs. Bridle reminded Mr. Barrington that the litigation/financial impact report and vehicle list for the Police Department is due to the Budget Committee on September 16th.

Downtown Lighting

Mr. Sullivan asked if the town is proceeding with the replacement of the lights in downtown with the newer, high pressure sodium lights. Mr. Barrington said that he thought that was in progress and will follow up on that.

V. NEW BUSINESSGrant Acceptance Request

Mr. Warburton told the Board that since Captain Crofts has been with the Hampton Police Department he has done an outstanding job with securing over \$100,000 in grants for the town.

Captain Crofts requested that the Board of Selectmen schedule a Public Hearing to accept a Local Law Enforcement Block Grant in the amount of \$15,619.00. Captain Crofts said that they are looking to use the grant to offset the cost of the new portable radios.

Mr. Sullivan MOTIONED that the Board of Selectmen schedule a Public Hearing on September 8th for the acceptance of a Local Law Enforcement Block Grant in the amount of \$15,619.00 for the Police Department to use for the acquisition of portable radios.

Mrs. Bridle SECONDED

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

School Board Use of Meeting Room

Mr. Warburton reminded the Board of Selectmen that they have talked for the past few meetings about the Hampton School Board's use of the town office for their meetings. The School Board has voted unanimously to request the use of the Selectmen's Meeting Room for their meeting on the third Monday of each month. They are extremely pleased with the quality of the broadcast from this facility, and understand that if they were to change the date of meeting due to a holiday or unforeseen occurrence they would need to hold it at another location. Mr. Warburton said that the Hampton School Board has requested the use of the room beginning with their September 15th meeting.

Mrs. Bridle MOTIONED to allow the Hampton School Board to use the Selectmen's Meeting Room on the third Monday of each month.

Mr. Sullivan SECONDED

Mr. Workman said that this is with the caveat that the Board of Selectmen can meet elsewhere if they need to meet on that particular week, as long as it is legally posted. Mr. Sullivan said that he thinks this benefits the whole community.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

Request for Fund-Raising Toll Booth – North Coast All Star Cheerleaders

Mr. Warburton said he had concerns with this request for a voluntary toll. Mr. Sullivan said that it is one thing to allow the Associations affiliated with town departments hold voluntary tolls, but he was not in favor of having other organizations do that.

Mr. Sullivan MOTIONED to deny the request from North Coast All-Star Cheerleaders to hold a voluntary toll fund-raiser in Hampton.

Mrs. Bridle SECONDED

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

After School Program

Mrs. Bridle reminded the Town Manager that she had asked to be included in any “wrap-up” meeting for the After School Program. She understands that the Recreation Department has scheduled a meeting but she has not been informed of it and told the Manager that she would like to be included.

Channel 22

Mr. Sullivan announced that Channel 22 will be broadcasting the WHS home Football Games this season. He also noted that the computer that runs the Bulletin Board is not working properly and will be repaired or replaced.

Hampton Beach Commission

Mr. Workman told the Board that the Hampton Beach Commission met for the first time on August 14th. They reviewed the request from the Town Manager to meet with them regarding the town’s infrastructure upgrade project and have invited Mr. Barrington to attend their next meeting on September 18th at 7:00 PM in the Precinct Hall.

September 11th Remembrance

Mr. Workman asked if there are any plans for the Town to commemorate September 11th this year. Mr. Barrington will check to see if there are any organizations in town that will be doing something. Mr. Warburton noted that it is the United Way “Day of Caring” that a lot of people take part in.

Toll Change

Mr. Workman asked if the Board is going to talk about the Governor’s change to the toll collections. Mr. Warburton said that he had calls from Boston newspapers about this, and he talked to many people in the area that were not aware of this happening, he stated his major concern was with the lack of communication by the State. Mrs. Bridle said that during the six-week test, the town should get the revenue from the parking meters to cover the town’s additional expenses from the traffic on Route 1. Mr. Pratt noted that there wasn’t any back up on Route 95 on Friday at 6:00 PM, on the south side. Mr. Warburton said that he hopes it works. Mr. Sullivan said that he has not seen a big increase in truck traffic as yet on Lafayette Road.

Emergency Notification Procedures

Mr. Warburton said that under New Business next week, he would like the Board to discuss the emergency notification procedures. He asked the Board to think about what phone calls the Board members should be getting and at what level when there is an incident in Hampton.

Gazebo

Mrs. Bridle said that the gazebo was scheduled to be turned over to the town a couple of weeks ago and she would like to know what the status is. Mr. Barrington will follow up on that.

Senior Center

Mr. Warburton noted that the Board of Selectmen received a petition from approximately 80 residents requesting that the town purchase the Maranatha Church for a Senior Citizen Center. Mr. Barrington said that there are enough signatures to make it a petitioned warrant article, but he interprets it as a request for the Board of Selectmen to consider the matter. Mr. Warburton said that last year the voters turned down a

senior center and at this time the Board of Selectmen has not discussed warrant articles that will be put forth. Mr. Warburton said that the Board will have to discuss this at a later date.

VI. MINUTES

The minutes of August 11, 2003 were accepted as written.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Sidewalk Sale Permits
2. MS-4
3. Nursing Home Referral
4. Cemetery Deeds
5. Raffle Permit – Hampton Hurricanes

Mr. Warburton noted that Mrs. Anderson has done an exemplary job with the new sidewalk sale permit process. He pointed out that the process has worked and a vendor that requested a permit to sell “Self Defense Products” was contacted and he recommends that the request be denied.

Item #1 was removed from the consent agenda.

Mr. Sullivan MOTIONED that consent agenda items #2-5 be approved.

Mr. Workman SECONDED

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

Mrs. Bridle MOTIONED to deny the sidewalk sale permit request for Tates Craft and Candle for self defense products.

Mr. Sullivan SECONDED

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

Mr. Sullivan MOTIONED that the remainder of the sidewalk sale permits for the Seafood Festival be approved.

Mr. Pratt SECONDED

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Peter MacKinnon, Animal Control Officer, spoke about the West Nile Virus and said that the crow was found on Thursday at 6 Seavey Street. The crow was captured alive, which is preferred, in order to have it tested. Mr. MacKinnon said that virus is being transmitted by adult mosquitoes and he urged everyone to use insect repellent when outside. He added that dead crows or dead blue jays are not of concern and should not be reported, but that he should be called if a resident sees a bird acting erratically.

Mr. Charlie Preston, Glade Path asked the Board about the proposed Special Town Meeting, and asked if the subject of infrastructure construction at the beach could be added to the agenda. He said that would likely help get the required number of signatures for the meeting. Mr. Preston said that as far as the tolls go, he thinks it is working, but he suggested that the name of the toll booth be changed from “Hampton” to the name of the sitting governor.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Bridle MOTIONED that the meeting be adjourned. (9:00PM)

Mr. Pratt SECONDED

VOTE: UNANIMOUS FOR

Chairman

